LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 147
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

# Cromwell and His Times

Clement Wood

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# CONTENTS


| | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | A Puritan in the Making | 7 |
| | Family and Boyhood | 7 |
| | The State of England | 10 |
| | The King's Faults | 11 |
| 2. | The Long Parliament | 16 |
| | The Laudian Policy | 16 |
| | "Cromwell Is Up!" | 17 |
| | What Parliament Did | 19 |
| | The Grand Remonstrance | 21 |
| 3. | The Civil War | 23 |
| | Cavalier and Roundhead | 23 |
| | The First Three Years | 24 |
| | Cromwell's Soldiers | 25 |
| | Marston Moor | 26 |
| | Naseby, and the End | 28 |
| 4. | The Rump Parliament | 32 |
| | Reconstruction at Home | 32 |
| | Cromwell in Ireland | 34 |
| | Charles II in England | 35 |
| | Cromwell Sole Ruler | 38 |
| 5. | The Protector | 40 |
| | The Lord Protector | 40 |
| | A New Parliament | 42 |
| | The Major Generals | 45 |
| 6. | Foreign Affairs | 48 |
| | Situation in Europe | 48 |
| | Peace with Holland | 49 |
| | On the Sea | 51 |
| | Aid to France | 54 |
| 7. | The Strong Man Dies | 56 |
| | Illness and Death | 56 |
| | Final Honors to Noll | 58 |
| | The Great Man | 59 |

# CROMWELL AND HIS TIMES

## I.

### A PURITAN IN THE MAKING

*Family and Boyhood.*—Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, was vicar-general to Henry VIII. Cromwell had charge of the king's religious matters; the King, caring nothing for the advantages of a Protestant alliance which was accompanied by the vexation of a homely wife, had his minister executed upon the scaffold. Long before this royal killing, however, Cromwell's nephew, Richard Williams, had adopted the name of Cromwell, to hasten his rise into royal favor. He was soon knighted by the king, and was a champion in the tournament held at Westminster to celebrate Henry's betrothal to the princess Anne of Cleves.

This branch of the Cromwell family founded its fortunes on the wreckage of the medieval church. The Benedictine houses of Hinchinbrook and Ramsey were given by the king to the young Sir Richard Cromwell, and his estate increased healthily. On the execution of his kinsman, he wore mourning unrebuked, and died in his bed after six more years of prosperity. His son Henry was knighted by Elizabeth, and built himself an imposing house at Hinchinbrook. When the great Spanish Armada came, Sir Henry helped prepare against it with a touch of that military shrewdness and religious fan-

aticism which flowered fully in his far greater grandson. His heir, an Oliver Cromwell, received a third knighthood; on no less than four occasions James I was this knight's guest at Hinchinbrook House.

At Huntingdon, on April 25, 1599, a small nephew was born to this Sir Oliver, and was given the name of his prosperous uncle. Four days later the baby was christened at St. John's church in the same town. The child's father, Robert, if a less noticeable person than his brother at Hinchinbrook, was a man of substance and dignity. The child's mother, Elizabeth Steward, was descended from a family of Norfolk Stywards, and was not kin to the royal house of Stuart. Young Oliver was the fifth child; no one of Robert Cromwell's sons, except this boy, outlived babyhood.

His youth was clouded by sickness, physical and mental. He was a hypochondriac, as was Samuel Johnson later. On several occasions the Huntingdon physician was sent for at midnight to attend to young Oliver, who believed that he was almost dying, and "had fancies about the Town-cross." He was educated under Dr. Thomas Beard, a fervent Puritan, at the free school in Huntingdon; from him he received some harshness, a sound education, and a contagious belief that the honest man could easily prove that the Pope was the Antichrist foretold in the Book of Revelations. A healthy boy could have thrown this poisonous partisanship off, like a child's treble or the measles; but Oliver was not healthy. At seventeen, he went on to Cambridge, another hotbed of Puritanism,

especially in Sidney Sussex College, which he entered in 1616, the year that Shakespeare died.

Mathematics he enjoyed, and history; but his languages were poor. He left without a degree, perhaps due to the death of his father in 1617. After a short stay he left home again, not to return to the unspecialized ease of college, but to study law at Lincoln's Inn, London. Here he fell into the dissipations of youth, and fell out more speedily; paying back, the story says, all that he had won at gambling. He could look back upon a passable education, and one other thing, as James Heath declares in his *Flagellum*:

"Oliver Cromwell was more famous for his exercises in the fields than in the schools, being one of the chief match-makers and players at football, cudgels, or any other boisterous game or sport."

This must have gone far toward restoring him. A similar effect must have followed from his marriage, on August 22, 1620, to Elizabeth, daughter of Sir James Bourchier, a city merchant of Tower Hill, London, and of Felstead in Essex. She brought her young husband money, and made him a capable and devoted wife. By 1620, then, at twenty-one years of age, the future Protector was back in his native county, settled upon his father's estate; confronted apparently with no more serious cares than to provide for his widowed mother, his wife, and his family, and to farm his estate.

This was the obvious picture: a closer view would be more revealing. Carlyle, a passionate defender of Cromwell's, pictures for us what he

was then, and what he continued to be to his death:

"An outer hulk of chaotic confusion, visions of the Devil, nervous dreams, almost semi-madness; and yet such a clear determinate man's energy working in the heart of that."

The last is Carlyle's conclusion merely; we can be certain only of the sick visionary exterior and interior of the man.

*The State of England.*—In 1628, Cromwell was returned (or elected) to Parliament as member for Huntingdon borough; early the next year he spoke on the Puritan doctrine, complaining of an attempt by the king to silence his old tutor, Dr. Beard, who had raised his voice against the "flat popery" preached by the noted Dr. Alabaster at Paul's Cross. Cromwell was also one of the members who refused to adjourn, at the king's command, until Sir John Eliot's resolutions had been passed.

His means, not too great at first, were improved by two successive legacies. By 1638, eight children had been born to his wife, the first six in the old home at Huntingdon, the two youngest in the quiet "glebe house" at Ely to which he removed on the death of his mother's brother, Sir Thomas Steward, who made Cromwell his heir. He was not sorry to leave Huntingdon, for he had had a bitter quarrel with the mayor, due to his espousal of the unpopular side of a local issue. He defended the rights of the commoners of Ely, threatened by the drainage of the Great Level; for this a royalist newspaper nicknamed him "Lord of the

Fens." Later, when the commoners of St. Ives complained to the Long Parliament about certain enclosures, Cromwell took up their cause "with great passion." He was already, in other words, one of those restless persons called "public-spirited citizens," eager to fly into any abstract quarrel involving concrete claims of rights. Such men are motivated by an inner warping and restlessness; they are essential to progress, though they rarely live serene and balanced lives.

For that tempestuous scene at the end of the parliamentary session of 1629, when the Speaker was held down in his chair, while Black Rod knocked in vain at the locked doors of the House, and the three king-defying resolutions of Eliot were carried amid wild enthusiasm, the parliament was at once dissolved, and for eleven years the king ruled without recourse to a single parliament. It is hard to disentangle the tortuous charges and countercharges of the hectic period; but the Earl of Clarendon's division of the charges against the king into three major accusations may be followed. These were:

1. His unseasonable, unskillful, and precipitate dissolutions of parliament.
2. The extraordinary ways in which he sought to get money during the eleven years.
3. The high-handed policy of Charles in Scotland.

*The King's Faults.*—Between his accession in 1625, and the opening of the 11 years tyranny in 1629, Charles met three parliaments, and dissolved each of them in anger. The first came

to grief over supplies; the next criticized foreign policy and its failure, with the Duke of Buckingham as scapegoat; the third one first wrung from Charles a great concession, then waged open war with him upon financial and ecclesiastical matters. Eliot defined the reasons for parliament's stand definitely:

"Those rights, those privileges that made our fathers freemen are in question. If they be not now the more carefully preserved, they will render us to posterity less free, less worthy than our fathers."

Two years before, Charles had worded his arrogant counterclaim of power:

"Remember that parliaments are altogether in my power, for their calling, sitting, and dissolution. Thereore, as I find the fruits of them good or evil, they are to continue, or not to be."

Whom the gods destroy, they first make arrogant. The Stuarts had come to preach the divine right of kings; the stalwart English believed that a king was only a man, and that the voice of the people was the voice of god. Men today have come to see that neither kingly rights nor mass thinking are made in heaven.

As to the king's financial oppression, the king, deprived of income by parliament, had hunted up antiquated precedents, and had thoroughly angered the living English with dead demands. Written law merely crystallizes the best collective sense of any period. If today it were discovered that an old 1650 law of New York, never repealed, provided a jail sentence

for wearing a red cravat on Sunday, it would not be ethical or right, or, indeed, legal, in the highest sense, to apply it today. These laws were dead; it did not make Charles popular to endeavor to blow breath into their corpses. Among other annoyances, he discovered that every country gentleman with an estate worth £40 a year found himself obliged to become a knight, or pay heavily; £170,000 came in from these fines including £10 from Oliver Cromwell. The old forest laws were revived, and used or abused; the tonnage and poundage laws, providing a tax on every tun or cask of wine, and every 20s worth of dry goods, entering or leaving the country, which Parliament had expressly provided it should allot to the king, was put in force by him without Parliamentary sanction, and occasioned further irritation. In 1634 the most unpopular of all the king's financial measures, a direct tax, the famous ship-money, was levied. An old law justified the king's right to levy local contributions to provide for a navy; this tax, levied on the coast counties in 1634, was extended the next year to include inland counties as well. Year by year royal collectors found it harder and harder to secure their quotas. For example, the arrears in Shropshire for 1636 amounted to £52, 17s, 6d; in 1637, to £172, 16s, 2d; in 1838, to £676, 1s, 11d. John Hampden, a cousin of Cromwell's in Buckinghampshire, refused to pay, and went to law; earning nothing but a judicial decision in favor of the king and the tax. Courts are usually about as progressive as moss-backed boulders.

James I of England, who had been James VI of Scotland, had theoretically united the two kingdoms. But they stayed far apart, especially in religion. Scotland was all for strict Presbyterianism; Stuart England for the high church practices of Archbishop Laud, which amounted to Roman Catholicism translated into English. In 1637, the King ordered Scotland to adopt a prayer-book like the English. Small and great united in opposition. Edinburgh mobs threw stones through the windows of St. Giles' Cathedral, while the dean read the new service in a deserted church behind locked doors. The Scottish National Covenant of 1638, high-minded and tactless, should have warned even a Stuart what he had to expect, if he continued in his mulish ways. The brief Bishops' war, that followed, ended inconclusively. Needing Parliamentary backing for a war with Scotland, Charles summoned his fourth Parliament to meet in April, 1640.

Cromwell was a member of this body; after twenty-two days of eloquent protests, the parliament was dissolved like the rest. The king was urged to summon another parliament, and he convened one to meet in November of the same year. Cromwell came back to Westminster, again from Cambridge. England and Scotland were again at peace, after the briefer 2nd Bishops' War. But, by the humiliating terms of the Treaty of Ripon, Northumberland and Durham were in Scotch hands as security for £850 a day, to be paid by the king to their troops till a permanent settlement was made. The new parliament would have much to crit-

icize; they could expect a spiteful snarling attitude from the king. Under these pleasant auspices the Long Parliament began its sessions.

## II.

### THE LONG PARLIAMENT

*The Laudian Policy.*—The Long Parliament, which met in November, 1640, was to have thirteen years of life, and more than one resurrection. It had to face especially the king's attitude upon religion; for what he had sought to do in Scotland was only an indication of what he was trying, in a larger way, to do to England. Opposition centered against the king's favorite, William Laud, former Bishop of London, Archbishop of Canterbury since 1633, who used his authority to promote the so-called "Laudian policy," with the king's hearty encouragement.

Laud's desire was that the reformed church of England should not lose either in dignity or unity by the changed conditions. He would have bishops authoritative and priests respected; he would have public worship everywhere restrained in a uniform strait-jacket; the sacraments and sanctity of the priesthood he wished to be emphasized generally. His power he used ruthlessly, inflicting ferocious sentences upon his opponents through the Court of High Commission. An example of the strength of feeling against the Laudian attitude is shown by an incident occurring on the distant Welsh border in 1633. Here a certain Enoch ap Evan, a farmer at Clun in Shropshire, murdered his brother John, for the satisfactory reason that John received the sacra-

ment kneeling, while he, Enoch, received it sitting and bowing his head.

Oliver Cromwell, as might have been expected, was entirely out of sympathy with the Laudian extremism. His first speech in Parliament, in 1628, had been a denunciation of the "flat popery" preached by a Laudian disciple. During the years following, he had earned for himself the reputation of being "a common spokesman for sectaries," or anti-Laudians. There were moments when he thought of leaving England altogether; in 1631 he had converted all his land into money, and only the inheritance of his uncle Steward's estate at Ely had arrested him. With his depressing hypochondria, or self-made invalidism, he had brooded over the question, until he had become an extreme liberal, if not a fanatic, in religion.

Later on, contact with men and affairs bred in him a strong-souled tolerance. But in 1640 this was still before him; for the time he was a terrible, though a valuable, member of committees, and a scandal to those of his colleagues who shrined tact and social calm ahead of the fiery zeal and sincerity that drove Cromwell on. He exaggerated, he lost his temper, he interrupted and browbeat his opponents; yet even his opponents recognized in him no mere testy weakling, but a strong, great, warped man.

*"Cromwell is Up"*—Within six days of the meeting of Parliament, the cry "Cromwell is up!" passed through the halls. The ill-natured savage from Cambridge was making a speech. John Lilburn, who was to become for a time Cromwell's loudest advocate, and later on an

irritation to him, had been shut up in Fleet Prison for bitter criticism of the queen and her ways. It was Cromwell who rose to deliver a petition for the prisoner, and who in the end won his release. A royalist onlooker, Sir Philip Warwick, has described the scene for us:

"I came into the House one morning . . . . and perceived a gentleman speaking whom I knew not, very ordinarily apparelled; for it was a plain cloth suit which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor. His linen was plain, and not very clean, and I remember a speck of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar; his hat was without a hatband; his stature was of a good size; his sword stuck close to his side: his countenance swollen and reddish: his voice sharp and untunable, and his eloquence full of fervor."

There would be more of a speck of blood upon his record, before he and England were through with one another. Cromwell's genius was not in Parliament; he was no orator, choked in the shell as he was; at best, he could go off into great vehement sermons before Parliament, rather than logical speeches. But, says Warwick,

"He was very much hearkened unto; which was astonishing, for he aggravated the imprisonment of this man . . . . to that height that one would have believed the very government itself would be in great danger by it."

Just as, long before, he had so aggravated his opinion of his own condition, that he had the doctor summoned at midnight, believing that he was dying. To Cromwell, no doubt, the imprisonment of Lilburn was a symbol of wider things.

In committees, as Clarendon reports, "Mr. Cromwell did answer Lord Manchester and reply upon him with so much indecency and rudeness, and in language so contrary and offensive," that it was clear that no real agreement was possible. Clarendon, of course, is a witness from the opposition; since Cromwell's cause ultimately failed, most of the witnesses have come from the opposition. Discounting all these, we still have the hypochrondriac youth, the violent man.

*What Parliament Did.*—Almost every month in the first two years of the session, 1640-1642, was of importance. From one reforming measure to another the House passed, growing more daring, more triumphant, less tolerant, with every step. At first, part of the Lords and all of the Commons united in reproach of the king, who accordingly had neither money nor a party. Slowly a body of "constitutional royalists" came into being, who added to their belief in liberty of discussion and the importance of parliament a genuine esteem for the royal office.

Parliament went first after the king's ministers. Highest in popular detestation stood Laud and Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, the latter a turncoat friend, now enemy. Both had sowed the arrogant wind; both reaped a bloody whirlwind. For seven months Parliament wrangled over Strafford's case, at last changing the method from trial for treason to an attainder; 204 to 59 was the final vote against him; and evil Laud, hands raised in the episcopal blessing, watched from a window

as Strafford went his way to death. Four years afterwards Laud met the same reward.

The second group of measures were concerned with the vindication of the rights of Parliament. These met with general support. The Triennial Act of February, 1641, provided for meetings of Parliament at least once every three years, and for a session of 50 days at least, unless dissolved before with their own consent. In May, a pendant to this act provided that the existing Long Parliament should not be dissolved, but by its own act. The next month, the tonnage and poundage tax was taken from the king, and awarded to Parliament. The king was granted the customs on wool and hides, and certain other minor duties. In August another source of income was dried up, when the ship-money was declared illegal. All the obnoxious abnormal courts were swept away; impotently the king sat watching the gradual clipping of his wings.

If these acts found him alone, the religious dispute that soon came to a head created a party for him. There were three chief parties slowly developing: those who wished to strip the bishops of secular and parliamentary power, while preserving the Book of Common Prayer and the episcopal government of the church; the "Root and Branch" party, who sought to destroy the prayer-book and uproot the bishops entirely; and the extreme left, who wished to have each separate community of Christians govern itself and worship as it chose. The Lords rejected a compromise bill, partially dispowering the bishops; the Root and Branch

party; instigated by Sir Henry Vane, had Sir Edward Deering bring forward a bill "for the utter eradication of bishops, deans, and chapters." In the tumult of discussion over this, the House adjourned on September 9th. Meanwhile, two matters increased the resentment against the king: a plot to abduct two of the chief Presbyterian leaders in Scotland, and the outbreak of the Irish rebellion. The House, deeply distrustful of Catholic Ireland, was moved to consternation by this news, which increased as the outbreak became more bloody and terrible. Cromwell joined the general clamor, and put down £500 among the other subscriptions to the funds for the reconquest of Ireland.

*The Grand Remonstrance.*—All this paved the way for the impressive Grand Remonstrance of November to December, 1641. It was carried 159 to 148—a scant majority of 11. From 9 o'clock one morning to 2 a. m. the following morning they debated; as they left, Cromwell whispered in Falkland's ear,

> "If the Remonstrance had been rejected, I would have sold all I had the next morning, and never have seen England more; and I know there were many other honest men of the same resolution."

The bill provided a straight and narrow path for the king to set his fantastic toe upon. Ministers were to be chosen only with parliamentary consent; he was to act with Parliament against Papists, bishops, and ceremonies. The "No Compromise" party was definitely in the saddle at last. To this the king could not assent; the outbreak of civil war was only a question of time.

The bishops withdrew from the House of Lords, in fear of violence; in return, the Commons impeached them. There was talk of impeachment of the Queen, which had been broadly hinted in the Grand Remonstrance. The king rode two ways in answer: promoting Falkland, Culpepper, and other constitutional royalists, and endeavoring to detach certain extremists, including, it is believed, the irreconcilable Pym himself. In the other direction, he singled out his five leading opponents: Pym, Hampden, Denzil Holles, Arthur Hazelrigge, and William Strode, and went into the House of Commons itself, to have them apprehended and executed. They had fled for safety to hospitable London; the London citizens soon brought them safe back to Westminster, where Parliament was meeting.

This meant war. Outside of soldiers, two things were essential: ports, and powder. In the first quest, Parliament was the more successful. The ports had not forgotten the ship-money tax. The southern harbors, Plymouth, Portsmouth, and the rest, fell to its lot, as did the eastern, with the exception of Newcastle-on-Tyne. In each county there was a scramble for the local powder magazine. Cromwell acted with invaluable promptness in seizing the store in Cambridge castle; in other spots, the king was first. On August 22, 1642, the signal for war was given.

## III.

### THE CIVIL WAR

*Cavalier and Roundhead.*—A common statement is that this was a class war. The royalists encouraged the belief, pretending that the king was supported by the ancient nobility, and the Parliament by people of inferior degree. To the contrary, the line of division was vertical rather than horizontal. Children of the same mother fought on opposite sides; this was often due to shrewdness, so that, whichever side won, the family would not lose. In Nottinghamshire, for example, the earl of Kinston "divided his sons between both parties, and concealed himself." As he worded it,

> "When I take arms with the king against the parliament, or with the parliament against the king, let a cannon-ball divide me between them."

He was forced later to abandon neutrality, declared for the king, was captured by Parliament, and, while sailing down the river to Hull, a cannon-ball from the king's army neatly sliced him in two, thus letting him die according to his own imprecation.

Geographical generalizations, in this conflict, are somewhat tricky also. Broadly speaking, north and west went one way, east and south the other. Every county, however, had its division; in the royalist territory, the great manufacturing and trading towns, such as Plymouth, Bristol, and Gloucester, held firm for parliament. On both sides, the soldiery at first were execrable. Local militia companies could hard-

ly be persuaded to leave their home neighborhoods; the Londoners being the chief exception to the general inefficiency, and serving the Parliament excellently. Both sides drafted soldiers, and both relied upon individuals to raise regiments wholly or partly at their own expense, a reed far from strong. Arrears of back pay increased. At first, the rank and file on either side did not know nor care what they were fighting for, or whom. Most important of all the army were the cavalry, whose two duties in battle were to charge fiercely and recover quickly. Only bitter experience taught the second lesson. In the infantry, there were two pikemen to one musketeer; artillery was throughout the war of slight importance. Discipline on both sides was almost unknown.

*The First Three Years.*—The first three years gave no decisive change of fortune in favor of either side. Charles's general object was to re-establish himself in London. In his march in that direction in 1642, a battle at Edgehill, near Banbury, was claimed by both sides; Parliament especially voting its general, the earl of Essex, £5,000 and its gratitude. Soon Charles retired to winter quarters in Oxford; for two years the royalists remained here. In the north, York served the same purpose for the Parliamentary forces under the earl of Newcastle, while Hull was the center for the Parliamentarians under Lord Fairfax.

1643 started royally for the king's forces. In Cornwall and Devon to the south, Sir Ralph Hopton and Sir Bevil Grenville won one success after another. They moved east and south

as far as Sussex, where in December Arundel castle fell into their hands. Rupert meanwhile took Bristol, the second port in England; but Plymouth still stood with the Roundheads, and menaced the royalists from the rear. In the north, efforts to dislodge the Parliamentarians from Hull uniformly failed; Newcastle, even with the minor victory of Adwalton Moor, did not dare leave for the south.

In the center, fortunes of war held evenly. Charles besieged Gloucester in August; Essex hurried to the rescue; Charles lifted the siege. Then he fell upon Essex's forces at Newbury, in Berkshire. All day the fight raged in the narrow lanes; next morning, Charles had vanished.

*Cromwell's Soldiers.*—From the beginning of the war, it had been customary for several counties to join together, with a common general and pooled resources: The most famous of these societies was the association of the eastern counties, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridge, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, and later Lincolnshire. Cromwell was the leading spirit here, and soon made its forces different from the listless others. Cromwell had raised a troop of eighty horses, and gone to the Edgehill campaign; at the battle, he had seen Prince Rupert and his cavalry at their work, and had noted with admiration the charge of fine horse with an inspiring leader,

> "All going like a cataract under a rainbow . . . . right into the middle of the enemy, and through; and he a spark ahead, and the enemy streaming on all sides flat away, as you see puffed smoke and flame on a bonfire."

Cromwell determined to raise in his own district men of honor, courage, and resolution, who had the spirit of these gentlemen. By September, 1643, he had no less than ten troops of these picked men.

1644 opened with outside alliances for both sides. Charles had come to terms with the Irish rebels; Parliament had made a solemn league and covenant with the Scots. The Irish regiments came; Fairfax defeated two of them soon after their landing at Nantwich in Cheshire, and took 800 of them into his own army. The Scots, on the contrary, advanced steadily through Northumberland and Durham, shut Newcastle up in York, and sat down in April, with Fairfax's army, to besiege him. Newcastle appealed for help to the king; finding the armies of Essex and Waller uncomfortably close on each side, Charles turned heels and made for the west, with 6,000 men.

Parliament now reorganized, forming a Committee of England and Scotland to direct the whole war. Cromwell, now Lieutenant-General of the Eastern Association, was one of the English members. He was nominally second in command; the indolence and half-heartedness of the titular commander, the earl of Manchester, gave him the real control. The enthusiasm of Cromwell and his troops soon leavened the whole lump.

*Marston Moor.*—At the beginning of June, this army joined the other two before York. At the end of the month, Prince Rupert appeared with his forces from the south, and reached his friends in York without striking a

blow. The united royalist armies then offered battle on Marston Moor. The Scots and Lord Fairfax gave way; but Cromwell and his 5,000 men trounced Prince Rupert, restored the routed Parliamentarians, and gained the most complete victory that had yet been obtained in the war. The victors took over the ordnance, carriages, and baggage of the prince; whereupon he fled, with as many as he could save, toward the south. Newcastle left with a few choice friends for Germany, leaving Sir Thomas Glenham governor of York. The city was soon surrendered.

Rupert himself regarded Cromwell as his most formidable enemy, and gave him the nickname which later his men shared with him, "Old Ironsides." Cromwell, in his devout mysticism, gave credit for the victory to God:

"God made them as stubble to our swords. We charged their regiments of foot with our horse, and routed all we charged. Give glory, all the glory, to God."

In ancient times, God was invariably seen by the poets, then the historians, as fighting in person with his side. The later fashion is to attribute to him the weakening of the enemy, and the strengthening of his own troops. Both of these ideas emanate, however, from the human side of the conflict.

Despite the completeness of this victory, Charles had won a small success at Cropredy Bridge, in Oxfordshire, and soon won another at Lostwithiel, in Cornwall. Essex himself escaped abroad, and most of his men returned, unhurt and disarmed, to their homes. The East-

ern Association army was ordered south, and Cromwell was eager to go; his superior, Manchester, insisted that they stay in their own locality. At length they departed after Charles; and Manchester was responsible for the indecisiveness of the battle at Newbury. As the earl put it,

> "If we beat the king 99 times, yet he is king still, and so will his posterity be after him; but if the king beat us once, we shall all be hanged, and our posterity made slaves."

It was human obstacles like this that Cromwell had to contend with, even on his own side.

*Naseby, and the End.*—Parliament determined upon such a reorganization of its forces, as would make a termination of the war possible. During the last months of 1644, Cromwell had brought the quarrel with Manchester and other disheartened incompetents to the surface. The Lords and the Scots sided with Manchester; the Commons declared for Cromwell. In February and April, 1645, Parliament passed the New Model and Self-Denying Ordinances. The first reduced the number of Parliamentary troops to 22,000—6,600 horses, 1,000 dragoons, and 14,400 foot, to be paid by a regular monthly assessment on each county. "Black Tom" Fairfax, whose military skill was unquestioned, and who wisely kept his politics to himself, was made general. It was to provide him with subordinates in sympathy with the progressive policy that the Commons forced the Lords in April to agree to self-denial. By the second bill, "all and every one of the members of either house of parliament" were to be dis-

charged from civil or military authority within forty days.

This included Cromwell. He came in early to lay down his command; he was sent off on one piece of business after another, proved more indispensable than ever, was given an extra forty days of grace, and finally was appointed Lieutenant-General for as long as the army and Fairfax should need him.

He and his 600 horse were with the army of 13,000 men who fought the king at Naseby, near Market Harborough, on June 14, 1645. Things looked well for the royal forces. In Scotland, Montrose had won several victories for his cause. Fairfax had begun a siege of Oxford; the king's capture of Leicester at the end of May put an end to it. There were only 9,000 in the royal army; but their cavalry was almost as numerous as the Parliamentary horse; and many of the Parliamentary foot were raw and uncooked recruits.

The battle broke. Four out of five of Fairfax's regiments of foot soldiers were broken by the attack of the royalist infantry; Major-General Skippon, of the Parliamentary side, an invaluable officer, was seriously wounded; Rupert swept Ireton and his Parliamentary horse on the left in confusion before him, and pounded them into Naseby village. Where was "Noll" Cromwell? The king, watching the battle from the safety of the reserve, saw Cromwell's horse thunder down like a wild torrent on Sir Marmaduke Langdale, and his own left. Nothing could stop them: in a little, the broken troops eddied back around the king himself. Charles

put spurs to his horse, to ride into the battle. "Would you go upon your death?" warned an attendant, plucking at his rein. So he turned, and withdrew, and watched his cause go down in the dust of utter defeat.

Cromwell's trained men rallied at once, and tore at the royalist center. Regiment after regiment was beaten and broken. Rupert returned for an unavailing final charge. By evening, the royalist foot were prisoners, their horse were spurring for Leicester and safety. "The king and the kingdom were lost," said Clarendon, at Naseby. He was right, despite minor fighting thereafter. Montrose, in Scotland, after slight winnings, was defeated decisively at Philiphaugh, beside Ettrick water in southeastern Scotland. A little later Charles, who had moved north to join him, was stopped at Rowton Heath near Chester, and gave up his plans. In March, 1646, the king's last army surrendered.

The defeated king tried a complicated diplomacy, which failed in the end. There was a less important second civil war, with the Scots largely on the king's side. The Army began to see that it had two enemies in England, the squabbling Parliament and the king. The first was soon disposed of. When members of the House came down as usual on December 6, 1848, they found a guard of musketeers at the door, and Colonel Pride standing by with a list in his hand. One by one those on his black list were sent away, or, if they resisted, were jailed. "Pride's Purge," as the exploit was named, had drained the Commons of all save

the minority of Independent friends of the Army.

Cromwell, as soon as he heard of this, approved of the emergency measure; and he was in favor, reluctantly at first, then whole-heartedly, of the next step, the trial and execution of the king. In the end he believed that the duty was cast upon the nation by God Himself. On January 6, 1649, the fragmentary or Rump Parliament passed an act setting up a high court of justice "for the hearing, trying, and judging of Charles Stuart." From the 8th to the 27th, the commissioners sat in the Painted Chamber, or adjourned to Westminster Hall. On January 30th, Charles was beheaded in front of his palace of Whitehall, London. The will of the people, as incarnate in an energetic minority, had spoken: the dusk of the kings had this premature announcement. From now on, no English king dared rule as a divinely named autocrat: if he ruled, he ruled with the permission and during the good pleasure of those who had been before there were kings.

## IV.

### RULE OF THE RUMP PARLIAMENT

*Reconstruction at Home.*—Charles I had been dethroned to make way, not for a new king, but for a republic.

> God said, I am tired of kings,
> I suffer them no more.

Such at least was the hope in the hearts of the intransigent minority who were now Parliament. A series of acts, in the first six months of 1649, tried to define affairs as they were. By one it was declared:

> "The people of England and of all the dominions and territories thereunto belonging, are and shall be . . . . a Commonwealth and Free State" to be governed "by the supreme authority of this nation, the representatives of the people in parliament."

A previous act had abolished the office of king, as "unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous to the liberty, safety, and public interest of the people." As G. K. Chesterton points out, a king remains king only as long as the people believe he is king; the moment that they collectively decide he is not, why, he is not, and that is all. Similarly, the House of Lords was abolished as useless and dangerous to the people; acceptable lords, however, could stand for the lower house. A council of state was appointed, to order the forces, reduce Ireland and other royalist strongholds, but to act throughout in strict subordination to Parliament.

The new commonwealth, in reality, did not live up to its high expectations. The American republic had to pass through the anarchic Articles of Confederation stage, before the Constitution made a real government for the newly united states. For it to stand for liberty and the ancient customs, two things logically should have followed: the Rump should withdraw, and be succeeded by a representative Parliament; and this body should set about removing such causes as had provoked the civil war and the troubles afterwards, insofar as they had not been removed by beheading the king and the other Parliamentary remedies already in force.

But this was an emergency time; the Rump had no intention of seeing its victory made void by a premature surrender of power. Soviet Russia, within the last decade, followed the same inevitable emergency course. There were enemies on every side of the young English republic; accordingly, from 1649 to 1653 it held the reins. Charles Stuart, dead, was a nobler enemy than Charles alive. A spurious volume of the king's reflections, really written by one Dr. John Gauden, named *Eikon Basilike* (the royal image), appealed to the sentimentality of the royalists, and affected some Parliamentarians who expected to see a Utopia on earth the moment that Charles bowed his way off the earthly stage. John Milton's great *Eikonoclastes* —the image breakers—was a magnificent answer, but reached only the more thoughtful. The Netherlands, whose king was related by marriage to the Stuarts, sided with the dead king. Germany, Sweden, Denmark, far-away

Russia, Papal France and Ireland, looked aghast upon the effrontery of a people who had dared to judge and condemn a pernicious monarch.

*Cromwell in Ireland.*—Charles II, son of the decapitated divine ruler, was duly proclaimed in Ireland to be the king of England. In March, 1649, Cromwell was appointed to command in Ireland, and in August, as Lord-Lieutenant and Commander-in-Chief, with excellent supplies and equipment, he landed in Dublin. In May, 1650, he returned. In these months he had wiped out the Irish royalist resistance, and had made his name a bloody terror for generations.

The first notable incident was the storming of Drogheda in September; Cromwell at once ordered deliberately the massacre of all of its defenders, some 2,800 persons. A month later Wexford was captured with almost as much bloodshed, though this was not so deliberate. Ireland at once learned its lesson. The work of reduction went on rapidly, and the whole of the coast from Londonderry to Cape Clear (except Waterford) was recaptured for the Commonwealth. Next he turned inland, and before he left had pushed the war well into the heart of Munster. Ireton and Ludlow completed the task, and in 1652 the fall of Galway ended the Irish war.

Cromwell's Irish campaign has often been singled out for reprobation by his enemies, or excuse by his friends. It needs neither, apart from the whole drive of his life. In everything he was lashed on by a Puritan conviction, emphasized because of a nature slightly warped

toward bloody greatness since boyhood, that the voice of God spoke in his ear, and the hand of God worked through his hand. The spirit of Cromwell's acts was the same, whether he was protecting slaughtered Vaudois Protestants, defending encroachments against ancient popular commons rights, leading his iron troops in the war, signing the royal death-warrant, or putting the men of Drogheda to the sword. The Puritan God that he served was largely the god of the Old Testament; and Cromwell was a mild follower of bloody Jehovah, god of terrible battles. To God, as was his custom, he gave the credit for what had occurred at Drogheda; we would be the last to disturb this arrangement.

Ireland was pacified more thoroughly before Parliament finished with her. Confiscation and conversion, without respect of persons, were the chief notes of the settlement. By act of 1652, the estates of Catholic landowners who had resisted Parliament were confiscated, with some porition in each case left to wife and children. Transplantations on a large scale took place; Connaught was largely peopled with dipossessed Irish, and their old homes were filled with good Puritans from England and even New England. Ireland was even given representation, of a sort, in Parliament; but old Catholic Ireland lay back, nursing its hatred.

*Charles II in England.*—A month after Cromwell returned to England, Charles II landed at Speymouth in Scotland. It looked as if the Commonwealth was in for another bloody war.

The typical Stuart indecision aided them, however. There were two royalist parties in Scotland: the reforming, led by the Marquis of Argyll, supported by the Scottish church, which would accept Charles if he accepted the Scotch Covenant in religion; and the unquestioning extremist royalists, led by Montrose. All through 1649 Charles had hung miserably in indecision, sure that the two parties could not unite, uncertain to which to commit himself. A curt note from Argyll let him know that if he did not accept their invitation, he would not get a second. He accepted, granted at Breda all Argyll's demands, and came to Scotland. Meanwhile Montrose had invaded Scotland and been routed at Carbisdale in the Highlands. When he landed, Charles was notified that his warlike earl had been executed for this.

His very presence in Scotland was a menace to the Commonwealth; and the English government prepared for war. Fairfax resigned his office of General, when he heard that it was proposed to invade "a neighboring nation"; Cromwell was appointed in his place, as Captain-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth forces. In July he invaded Scotland, and found there David Leslie, the Scottish general, with a larger force. Cromwell contrived to draw him out of an impregnable position in Edinburgh, and on September 3rd broke the enemy to pieces at the battle of Dunbar. One note of the battle is typical:

"Some of their preachers were knocked on the head, while they were promising the victory."

It was essential, in those days, to serve the same god in just the right way. Cromwell retired to Edinburgh. The Scots had few mourners; England rejoiced, and even Charles II found that the removal of some of the stricter Scottish party served his ends.

On January 1, 1651, Charles went through a ceremony of coronation in Scotland; but Cromwell came crashing down upon this slowly rising edifice of royal power. June and July, 1651, English and Scotch armies faced each other, till Cromwell outflanked the Scots. They turned south to invade England, Cromwell hanging on to their rear and flanks. At Worcester, while Charles was lunching, the forces joined; he came from his placid meal to find the whole body of his own horse running in utter confusion. He made good his escape to France, although most of his followers were less fortunate. This was the last of the great battles.

The Rump Parliament, whose irritations had continued, managed to hold out longer, because of trouble developing with Holland. A change in rulers caused the republican party in Holland to take control, and in their commercial rivalry with England they made a treaty, in March, 1651, with Denmark, concerning the Baltic trade, which was injurious to England The following October, the Rump Parliament retorted with the famous Navigation Act. This robbed the Dutch of their trade with English colonies; their market for fish; and their paying "carrying trade." After angry negotiations, war resulted. In this, the honors were

evenly divided between the great Dutch seaman Tromp, and the English "general at sea," Blake.

*Cromwell Sole Ruler.*—In the same year, discontent with the Rump came to a head. Taxes were heavier, thanks to the expenses of the war; external pressure was removed, and men could ponder their own grievances. Parliament was considering a new election, in which its present members would hold over, and control the choice of new members. Cromwell, with the army behind him, determined to resist this usurpation by one irresponsible chamber. He proposed a compromise, which was rejected; on April 20, 1653, they commenced to pass their representation bill, "the horridest arbitrariness that was ever exercised in the world," in typical Cromwellian exaggeration. Cromwell hastened to the House, and, as the bill was being put to the vote, whispered to Harrison, "This is the time; I must do it."

He rose, and, after alluding to the former good services of the Parliament, proceeded to overwhelm the members with reproaches. Striding up and down the House in a passion, he made no attempt to control himself, and, turning toward individuals, he hurled at each significant and biting epithets. Some were "whoremasters"; some, "drunkards, corrupt, unjust, scandalous to the profession of the Gospel."

A member, shocked to remonstrance, marvelled, "This is strange language within the walls of Parliament!"

Cromwell clapped his hat on his head, stamped out onto the floor, shouted, "Come, come, I will put an end to your prating! You are no parliament! I say you are no parliament. I will put an end to your sitting. In the name of God, go!"

By his directions Harrison then fetched in a small band of Cromwell's musketeers, and compelled the speaker to vacate the chair.

"It is you who have forced me to this," Cromwell shouted after the retreating members. "I have sought the Lord night and day, that He would rather slay me than set me upon the doing of this work."

When one wishes his god to order a certain thing, it is not hard to hear the wished-for words. If the thing desired is thought to be wrong, a censoring power within brings out the message as if reluctantly, thereby salving the conscience. At least, no Stuart had ever stormed at Parliament in such fashion. Probably no Stuart ever had the power Cromwell had, with his army at his back, and his god at his ear.

## V.

## THE PROTECTOR

*The Lord Protector.*—After the dissolution of the Rump Parliament, Cromwell, as Commander-in-Chief of the army, and sole power in the state, determined at once to summon another Parliament. This was the "Little" or "Barebones Parliament" (the latter name from a member with the excessively Puritanic name, Praisegod Barebones), which consisted of 140 persons selected by the officers from among those nominated by the congregations in each county. This met July 4, 1653; soon realizing that it was both impractical and incapable, on December 12, 1653, the speaker, followed by the more moderate members, marched to Whitehall and surrendered their powers to Cromwell. The army expelled the remainder. From this date till his death on September 3, 1658, for five brief years, Cromwell ruled England.

Within a week it was decided that his title should be Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland. The next five years marked an increasing tendency toward autocracy. Cromwell began his Protectorate as the elected official of a republic in name, and as a military dictator in fact; he ended it as something very like a king. This change was not essentially or consciously sought. He took the office with much unwillingness:

"I called not myself to this place. I say again, I called not myself to this place! Of that God is my witness."

He begged from time to time to be relieved of his burden of power. Yet, once bound to the task, it is clear that he had a high sense of the importance of the position, and was determined to exact due respect. More than this, his experiments with the vagaries of popular rule again and again tired him of the futility of looking for wisdom in the crowd as it then was. When he was criticized for setting up Major Generals, without authority of law, he slashed out:

"If nothing should ever be done but what is according to law, the throat of the nation may be cut while we send for some to make a law. Therefore certainly it is a pitiful beastly notion to think, though it be for ordinary government to live by law and rule, yet if a government in extraordinary circumstances go beyond the law, even for self-preservation, it is to be clamored at and blottered at."

When he accepted, in the Instrument of Government of December 16, 1653, the first written constitution England had ever had, he submitted to a network of safeguards, limitations, precise directions. Those who framed it told Cromwell, he said,

"That I did not hereby receive anything which put me in a higher capacity than before, but that it limited me."

Certainly the instrument provided Protector, Parliament, and People, as checks upon one another. Besides the life Protector, who had

no power to name his successor, there was a one-house Parliament of limited powers, and a council of state, appointed for life, who would control the Protector while he lived, and name his successor when he died. As to religion,

> "Such as profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, though differing in judgment from the doctrine, worship, or discipline publicly held forth, shall not be restrained from, but protected in the profession of the faith and exercise of their religion."

Tolerance did not yet reach to disbelievers in all gods, and to Jews and members of non-Christian creeds; indeed, Papists and Prelatists were classed with those who would abuse this liberty and disturb the peace, as exceptions to the rule of toleration.

*A New Parliament.*—The first Parliament under the new system was to meet in September, 1654. In the interim, Cromwell and his council, in 82 ordinances, disposed of the most pressing business, and laid down the main principles of action. The spirit of Praisegod Barebones was at last in the saddle; Puritanism was to be laid down in iron the length and breadth of England, in order to restore what must have been a strictly Puritanic Garden of Eden. Cock-fighting, horse-racing, gambling, idle sports, were to be sternly repressed. The Sabbath was to be strictly observed. Education, especially university education, was to be encouraged, for purposes of piety rather than pure learning. England was to have a Puritan reading, Puritan writing, and Puritan arithmetic.

Cromwell hurled himself with immense energy into recreating a better race of Englishmen than the original artisan had achieved. Yet in practice the system did not work so evilly; lack of enforcement machinery and good sense softened the stern statutes when applied to living men. In general religious matters Cromwell showed a commendable broadmindedness, scandalizing thereby some of his stricter colleagues. Tithes and parishes were retained, and benifices should be conferred on Puritans recommended by the Board of Triers who weighed the beliefs of applicants. Of course, Papists and Anglicans were still outside the fence. The Protector was willing to contemplate toleration for Jews and Catholics, but public opinion was too bitter against both to allow any forward steps in these instances. He achieved some reforms in civil practice, and wished to reform the oppressive criminal laws; this did not go beyond a wish.

During these years, Cromwell's rule and even his life were threatened on every side. His friends were not numerous; his enemies open or secret, were even harder to compute. His semi-monarchical position outraged the Levellers, or democrats; his religious policy infuriated the Presbyterians. Lilburn courted martyrdom by loud-voiced disaffection; Vane quietly effaced himself from public life. Royalist efforts, though futile, were persistent. Scotland and Ireland were only held down by force. Men found it safest to journey in groups through lonely places. Presbyterian preachers, smarting under armed rule, prayed

openly for the king in church. The air whispered plots. 1655 saw a general royalist conspiracy; in Wiltshire, Penruddock and others actually occupied Salisbury, when the city was crowded for the assizes. Divided counsel ruined this; the conspirators could not agree whether to hang the judges and sheriff or not. The little fire burnt out, costing only the lives of its starters; but it was significant of the hour.

Yet all the time the power of the sword was with the Protector. Royalist danger thinned as living memories of Charles I died; most Englishmen had never seen his son. Royalist danger, then, did not so much threaten the overthrow of the Protectorate, as insensibly govern its tendency. It inclined Cromwell toward the assumption of a more kingly state to counterbalance it.

Cromwell's relations with his parliaments illustrate what was heavy in the air. He had only two parliaments during his term of office. The first met in September, 1654, and was dissolved the January following. The second met in September, 1656, was adjourned in the next May, met for a second session in January, 1658, and was dissolved in February. The parliament of 1654 was freely elected, except that men who had served on the king's side in the civil war, and had not since come over to the Parliamentary side, could not be returned; and, of course, Catholics were forbidden even the right to vote. Healing and settling, Cromwell told them, was their task. To the contrary, the Speaker set them to dis-

cussing the problem of who had called them to meet, and by what authority. Cromwell went down to the House again, and made a speech of passionate reproach. He asked a signed statement from them that they would not seek to alter the government; the members refusing were kept out; the balance wrangled, squabbled, did nothing. After the prescribed five months, the scrupulous Protector dissolved them.

*The Major Generals.*—Then followed an experiment which earned Cromwell more blame than anything in his career, except perhaps the Irish massacres. In August, 1655, he divided the whole of England into ten districts, and set up a Major-general as ruler in each. Their method of paying for armed power offended the royalists afresh; their wide duties, to maintain order, to secure the observance of all government acts, to inspect, report, and investigate all the morals and manners of their district, took them into every home, and incurred much resentment. Puritan England was to be made a reality under every roof in England by armed force.

This action, of course, violated the principles of the Instrument. Cromwell, faced with an annoying situation, met it in a despot's way. He saw the evidence of general indignation; in public, at least, he failed to understand the causes of public wrath. Justified or not, the expedient was eminently successful; obedient major-generals were much easier to get along with than argumentative members of Parliament. In September, 1656, the Protector called

a new House, in order to get money for his foreign policy by constitutional means. The major-generals did what they could to control the elections; nevertheless, a hundred known opponents to them and the Protector were among those returned, and these were excluded and sent home. The majority proved, at first, wholly complaisant. They voted supplies; they declared it high treason to plot against the Protector's government. But they would not confirm his personal authority, and they spoke sharply and openly against the major-generals.

Apparently, their objection was rather to Cromwell's rule without the name of king, than to Cromwell's rule as such. They debated the matter of authority to the Protector with much violence, and in the end, on March 31st, they went to him with their Humble Petition and Advice. In brief, they asked the man they called a tyrant, to rule them as a king. The situation stumped the leader:

"I should have a very brazen forehead indeed if it did not beget in me a great deal of consternation of spirit . . . . The thing is of weight; the greatest weight of anything that ever was laid upon a man."

The old exaggeration again. After much hesitation, with a chance for both sides to present their arguments, he gave his final reply on May 8, 1657:

"Truly this is my answer: that (although I think the act of government doth consist of very excellent parts, in all but one thing, or the title as to me) . . . . I cannot undertake this government with the title of king."

Caesar had put by the crown, but spoke well of the grant of power. On May 25th the proposal was presented again, with the title omitted; he accepted it gladly. It was under this second constitution that he ruled to his death, and his son after him.

The very title, "Humble Petition," as opposed to the straightforward "Instrument of Government," points to the status of monarch rather than elected official. The Lord Protector, by the new constitution, was to appoint his successor during his lifetime. Parliament was again to consist of two houses, the second of which, called the Other House, was to be nominated by the Protector, and approved by the Commons. Its members were to sit for life. A Privy Council was provided for, and a yearly revenue of £1,300,000 was voted. A month later the Protector was installed afresh, this time with pomp and circumstance, velvet and ermine, sword and scepter. Nothing was needed to make it a coronation, observed Clarendon, except a crown and an archbishop.

However, when Parliament met again, Cromwell was again provoked to a dissolution. Meanwhile, foreign affairs were absorbing much of his attention.

## VI.

### FOREIGN AFFAIRS

*The Situation in Europe.*—One of the few sources of satisfaction Cromwell had during the last few months of his life was the news from abroad. Foreign affairs were going as he wished.

The Thirty Years War, begun largely with religious motives, had become essentially political in its aims. This ended in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia, in which almost all of Europe was involved. The war had passed through a Bohemian, a Palatine, a Danish, a Swedish, and at last a French period. Most of all it had enriched and advanced France. The treaty, however, left France and Spain still fighting; only in 1659 did their conflict end, and Cromwell was drawn into the last stages of this war.

France was now ruled by Cardinal Mazarin, in the name of young Louis XIV. The Spanish king, Philip IV, had neither ability nor opportunities to make his country great; he was frittering away his resources in struggles with Portugal, Catalonia, Naples, and Sicily, as well as France. The German princes after Westphalia were confirmed in their independence, and the emperor, Ferdinand III, found his powers clipped. The independence of Holland had been formally recognized. Two new northern Protestant powers, Denmark and Sweden, kept at each other's throats.

All of these various matters confronted

Cromwell, complicated by the altered status of European alignments. With Cromwell, religion would normally be the first consideration; but Papist France was fighting Papist Spain, and Protestant Denmark and Norway mutually tore each other. Again, England and Holland had been fighting since 1652. Commercial motives, then, now outweighed religious ones in international affairs.

Cromwell had never approved of the war with Holland. The Rump Parliament had passed the Navigation Act; Tromp and Blake had come to blows; logically, Cromwell believed that England was right, and warfare, once started, was not easy to stop, especially as the tide of battle inclined slightly to the Dutch. In 1654, the situation had changed in two essentials. Cromwell now had more power; and England was gaining the upper hand in the fighting.

*Peace With Holland.*—The upshot was that on April 5, 1654, a treaty was made. The Dutch withdrew their demand for a modification of the Navigation Act; and the province of Holland, by a private agreement, undertook to keep out from authority the house of Orange with its Stuart connection and sympathies. Four days later, a commercial treaty was made with Sweden, which for its part undertook to give no help to the English Charles II. Portugal, actually at war with England, was conciliated in July, and granted by treaty permission to England to trade with any Portuguese colony. Finally, in September, terms were made with Denmark, by which English

ships might pass through the Sound and the Baltic under the same condition as Dutch vessels.

These agreements brought substantial commercial advantages, and the downfall of English royalist hopes. A third aim, the league of all the Protestant states on the score of their common religion, had not been achieved. One problem lay still before him—the rivalry between France and Spain. Both sought his aid. The principle of the balance of European power, which loomed so large in previous and subsequent statesmanship, would have inclined him to throw his support to weak Spain, rather than augment the might of France.

This, however, Cromwell could not see. He was haunted by memories of Spain in her great day, when she was England's foe and the Pope's sword. He recalled, too, that Richelieu and France had helped the Protestants in the Thirty Years' War; ignoring the complicated diplomatic motives which had led to that course. Meanwhile, France and Spain put out their diplomatic feelers. France was willing to abandon the Stuart cause, and aid England to conquer the port of Dunkirk, some miles northeast of England's onetime possession, Calais. Cromwell countered with the proposal of a clause in any treaty made, granting to England the right to intervene in behalf of the Huguenots or French Protestants, if the rights secured to them by the Edict of Nantes should be in any way threatened. This France would not consider.

Spain, on her part, offered to help England

get Calais back again, and was prepared to grant subsidies to England if she would send troops to aid the prince of Conde, who was leading a rebellion against the French crown. Cromwell demanded sternly that Englishmen in Spanish territory be allowed to worship as they pleased, and that English traders in the West Indies should not be molested. "That is to ask my master for his two eyes," said the Spanish ambassador. Again the negotiations hung fire.

In the end, in October, 1655, Cromwell threw in his lot with France. "Your great enemy," he told the 1656 Parliament, "is the Spaniard. He is a natural enemy." He drew a sincere but absurd distinction between the Popery of France and that of Spain. France, he told them, was the one Popish nation which was not so bound to the Pope but that it would deal honestly with other nations. France, too, still harbored Charles II; Spain would not receive him, until it was certain England was not to be her ally; Holland after the treaty could not take him. In the end, he went to Cologne. In this Cromwell succeeded wholly. He deprived Charles of a refuge in any country where he could be dangerous.

*On the Sea.*—In the autumn of 1654, two fleets set out from England. One, led by Blake, was bound first for the Mediterranean, to put down piracy, and protect British trade. The other, led by Penn and Venables, sailed under sealed orders to the Barbados; and found, upon arrival, that they were to attack the Spanish island of Hispaniola. They failed miserably

in their attack on the island capital of San Domingo, partly through mismanagement, partly through the trying climate and the lack of water. In May, 1655, they wiped out the disgrace by taking the smaller island of Jamaica. It was not held without hard fighting and much suffering; at times the early settlers despaired of the future. Cromwell did not live to see the success of this plan, so near to his heart; Jamaica, however, remained in English hands, and became the nucleus of a vigorous colonial policy.

In the east, Blake was as successful as ever. First he made the name of the English navy a thing of dread in the southern Mediterranean. Then, at Cromwell's word, he turned against Spain. All through 1656 he hung about the Spanish coast, cutting off fleets sailing to Jamaica, and intercepting treasure homeward bound. One of his captains destroyed four and captured a fifth of eight Spanish treasure-ships off Cadiz. The greatest of Blake's victories was won at Santa Cruz, the port of the island of Teneriffe, the next year. A great Spanish treasure-fleet, ten small ships and six great galleons, was anchored in the offing; above them jutted the heavy cannon of a strong castle and several forts. Nothing, the Spaniard thought, could have been safer.

Then Blake sailed in. For four hours the English fought, till they harried the Spaniards out of their ships, and took possession of them. The wind suddenly failed. The English lay helpless, raked by all the cannon on shore. Deliberately the great sea-general set fire to

all the Spanish ships. At once the wind turned, and the whole English fleet, without loss of one ship, sailed out to sea. This, the devout of the day believed, was undoubtedly a miracle. Perhaps miracles, after all, consist in blundering into the path of the wind at the right time.

The fleet came home in August. As it entered Plymouth mouth, Blake, who had become ill, died. Cromwell paid high state honors to the dead admiral; for his lusty strokes had aided one of the Protector's chief ambitions, to increase and weld tightly to the mother country England's colonial possessions.

At Cromwell's birth, England had had no colonies. When he was forty, there were two settlements on North America,—the Puritan strip from Maine to Connecticut, and the Cavalier acres in Virginia and Maryland. In the West Indies, she had nothing important; Cromwell's fleet gave her Jamaica. Virginia and Barbados, tepidly royalist, proclaimed Charles II; Commonwealth warships had to persuade the colonists of the beauty of the Puritan rule. Even Puritan New England was over-sensitive. All the colonies united in opposition to the Navigation Act; not because it damaged the Dutch, but because it cut short their supplies, and made them more dependent on the fussy mother country. When the Long Parliament demanded that the American colonists aid the war against the Dutch by attacking New York, Massachusetts very sensibly would have nothing to do with the plan. Cromwell did secure an agreement to attack the

stronghold of Hollands in the new world; but peace came before war started.

*Aid to France.*—At last Cromwell threw in his lot with France, and against Spain. He was hastened in this decision by the fact that Mazarin, at his request, had used French influence with the Duke of Savoy, and had thus stopped the persecution of the Vaudois Protestants, in the Alpine valleys north of Lake Geneva. Spain retaliated at once with intrigue against the Protector, both abroad and in England. Whereupon England sent 6,000 men to join the French in an attack on Flanders, one of the Spanish Low Countries south of the freed United Netherlands.

In October, 1657, the allies fell upon the port of Mardyke, and took it. The following year, the port of Dunkirk was captured, and handed over to England. The Protectorate at one blow had ended Spanish hopes of restoring Charles II, and had acquired a foothold to compensate her for the loss of Calais under bloody Catholic Mary. A year later Spain was humbled to her knees, and the Treaty of the Pyrenees ended the war.

What, then, had Cromwell achieved in his foreign policy? He had made it impossible for any foreign power on earth to sit Charles the Stuart on the English throne. Wars had been waged briskly, and battles won. In Jamaica, England had a colony of permanent value; in Dunkirk, she had a gate to France. It is true, the gate proved so expensive and unsatisfactory that Charles II, not unwisely, gladly let it go. The Vaudois Protestants had

been aided, and the French alliance seemed good in every way. Of course, France had been strengthened; all Europe was menaced, the last half of the 17th century, by the aggressions and achievements of French Louis XIV. Yet Cromwell's one year's alliance is small, in comparison with Charles II's persistent courting of France. And Spain was dying anyhow; Blake's body blows only hastened the end.

## VII.

### THE STRONG MAN DIES

*Illness and Death.*—Cromwell's health had long been impaired by the hardships of campaigning. Now, at the age of 58, he had burned himself out; his body was old, his firm, strong signature had become weak and trembling. He knew now that great power was a great burden. A domestic sorrow pushed his vitality lower, in the death of his favorite daughter, Elizabeth Claypole, on February 8th, 1658. Soon afterwards he himself fell ill of an intermittent fever. On the 20th of August, the visionary George Fox met him riding at the head of his guards in the park at Hampton Court, and declared "he looked like a man dead already."

The next day, he became ill again. Alternately burning with fever and shivering with ague, he was removed from Hampton Court to Whitehall, where his condition steadily grew worse. His end was peaceful, for all the royalist and churchly lies circulated about it. On August 31st he rallied a trifle.

"I would be willing to be further serviceable to God and his people, but my work is done."

The minister attending him soothed his theological worries, assuring him that a man once in God's grace could not thereafter fall from this high estate. He was offered medicine to make him sleep.

"It is not my design to drink or to sleep, but my design is to make what haste I can to be gone."

Only a man who is calmly sure that he has lived out his life to the fullest, could say this with serenity, as Cromwell did.

By sunrise of the next day, September 3rd, the anniversary of his victories at Dunbar and Worcester, the Protector was speechless; during the afternoon he won a final victory, and returned into the silence and selflessness out of which he had come, as all men come.

His body was embalmed, clad in ermine and royal purple, and taken to lie in state at Somerset House. It was privately buried in the chapel of Henry VII in Westminster Abbey. The public funeral took place on the 23rd of November, with great ceremony and on the same scale as that of Philip II of Spain; this cost England the imposing sum of £60,000.

With him, although men did not see it at first, the Commonwealth was dead. On his deathbed great Noll had named his son Richard as Protector; on September 3rd, Richard was officially proclaimed the successor, and his accession was hailed at home and abroad. But he had no army at his back, as Oliver Cromwell had had; he had lived the life of a country farmer most of his years, occupied with field sports. He became a rag torn by Parliament on one side and the army on the other. On May 25, 1659, after months of impotence, he sent to the House his submission. He retired into private life, heavily burdened with debts; a year later he fled to France, where he lived in seclusion as John Clarke. In 1671 the English government sought him unsuccessfully, as a dangerous person. About 1680 he returned to

England and lived at Chestnut, in the house of Sergeant Pengelly, where he died on July 12, 1712, and was buried in Hursley church in Hampshire. He was a man of respectable abilities, called to sit in the saddle of the world.

*Final Honors to Noll.*—Charles II came back, and England took him to her throne again. He did not miss the opportunity of laying his tribute at the feet of Cromwell's greatness. The Stuart had the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw exhumed. On January 30, 1661, the anniversary of the execution of Charles I, it was drawn on a sledge from Holborn to Tyburn, accompanied by "the universal outcry and curses of the people." So the mob veers as the winds of government blow. The body was there hanged on a gallows, and in the evening taken down. The head was cut off and set up upon Westminster Hall; Cromwell, in this gory fashion, was set high over England by a Stuart. It remained here as late as 1684—23 years of this Christian reproof of dead power. The trunk, meanwhile, had been thrown in a pit beneath the gallows.

Legends arose, as legends will, that Cromwell had anticipated this post-mortem desecration, and had had his body hidden elsewhere in Westminster Abbey; or moved to Newburgh Abbey; or buried under Naseby Field. Believe these, if you insist; but it is almost sure that the tired dust of the great Protector lies where it was last buried, where Connaught Street now stands, a yard or so below the surface of the ground, trodden under foot, trampled by the hooves of horses, weighed down by motor

cars and great trucks. Dead as he is, he is still a part of England's soil; just as, living, he wound himself forever into her soul.

*The Great Man.*—There are two types of greatness, the warped and the serene; and the second is far the rarer and higher. Up to the time of Carlyle, all England had reviled dead Noll, both as a traitor at heart and a man insincere of soul. Carlyle, a great warped genius, bitter and tumultuous, established for good and all that Cromwell was no traitor, but a patriot; that he was not insincere, but driven on by a terrible sincerity. Among other warped instances of greatness may be mentioned in a loose group Nietzsche, Shelley, Mahomet, Milton, Caesar, Keats, Augustus. Among the rarer serene great the following may earn place, in greater or less degree—Shakespeare, Whitman, Buddha, Socrates, and one greater perhaps than any of these.

Cromwell was clearly not of the serene type; he was rugged, violent, uncontrolled, a volcano rather than an Everest. Yet there are certain astonishing things about his ability that merit mention.

He was a great military commander. He was not the brilliant captain that Hannibal was, or Caesar, or Alexander. But these men grew up almost in camp, with war almost their baby's pap; Oliver Cromwell was forty-three when he fought his first battle. In less than two years, he took his rank as one of the great cavalry captains of all history. He created a cavalry army out of psalm-twanging farmers. He learned, not out of books, but out of sight of

Prince Rupert and reflections on what he saw, that two things were essential: a unified shock-action, and a quick rally and recovery. His men were not so much paid soldiers, as soldiers fighting for the love of God in their hearts. At this time, European armies dilly-dallied, maneuvered for position, deadlocked interminably; Cromwell's troops decided any fight they took part in.

As statesman, Cromwell was forced into an emergency autocracy worse than anything the Stuarts had been guilty of. But it was, after all, an emergency autocracy. Vane and Ludlow, refusing to acknowledge Cromwell's government, said truly that it was "in substance a re-establishment of all we are engaged against." Charles I's ship-money is nothing beside Cromwell's wholesale taxation by ordinance; the extra-legal courts of the Stuarts were feeble, compared to Noll's inquisitorial Major-Generals and his unjust taxation of royalists; the shipment of British subjects as slaves to the Barbados had no parallel in Stuart chronicles; Cromwell's red scourge of Ireland was worse than the worst of Strafford; the prying into morals, the encouragement of informers, the attempt to make a people fit a religious strait-jacket by force, these were at least no better than the hated tyranny of Laud. Yet the Stuart had misruled in a calm hour, and Cromwell with the assassin's dagger poised ever at his back.

Cromwell's cause failed, with the Restoration; and his enemies smeared his memory with all the obloquy they could devise or wish. Claren-

don said he had all the wickedness against which damnation is pronounced, and for which hell fire is prepared. Contemporary republicans saw him a mere selfish adventurer, sacrificing the national cause before the idol of his own ambition. The royalists blackened his life and even his death. But Macaulay's irresistible logic and Carlyle's impassioned sincerity washed off the mud, and revealed the red marble underneath.

Cromwell did not plan out the path that he followed; it made itself for him, in the multifold formative influences of his troubled human environment. He himself saw and said this; in 1647 he said to the French ambassador:

"A man never mounts so high, as when he does not know where he is going."

Or falls so low, it might be added. The chief charge of hypocrisy was levelled against his constant use of Scriptural language. His prayer a few nights before his death is an example:

"Lord, though I am a miserable and wretched creature, I am in covenant with Thee through grace. And I may, I will, come to Thee for Thy people. Thou hast made me, though very unworthy, a mean instrument to do them some good, and Thee service . . . . And go on to deliver them, and with the work of reformation, and make the name of Christ glorious in the world. Pardon such as desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, for they are Thy people, too."

The savage, who held that the only way to acquire the virtues of an admired man was to eat his heart, would have gladly killed Christ, in order to become Christ-like through his own gory formula. Cromwell sought to make the

name of Christ glorious by methods more adapted to the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

But there was no hypocrisy in all this; he was sincere in the bloodiest of his godly fanaticism. He had seen devils in his youth; in his maturity he thought he saw them again, and beheaded one at Whitehall, and sent 2,800 more to their deaths at Drogheda. Nor was he even an extreme Puritan; many New England divines could have spared him the four aces, and still made out a safe game. The Reverend Samuel Willard, pastor of South Church, Boston, would never have seen God's people in the plotters against a Puritan government:

"Christ died for a select company that was known to him, by name, from eternity."

Jonathan Edwards phrased the Puritan conception with gloomy pleasure.

"The bulk of mankind is reserved for burning."

Judged by the typical Puritan standard, Cromwell was a mild and gentle saint.

We can see his pictures, painted by the greatest painters of his age: he looks like a great godly grouch. His instructions to Lely indicate that he was no fonder of prettifying than Walt Whitman was:

"Mr. Lely, I desire you would use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me, and not flatter me at all: but remark all these roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything, otherwise I will never pay a farthing for it."

In this account, the roughnesses and warts are all included; and they are no small part of the true picture. His devotion to his family

was in line with his solid British virtue. His mother lived to be 94, and moved upward with him from the glebe house at Ely to Hampton Court. Spiteful royalist Mrs. Hutchinson said of the rest of his intimate family,

"His wife and children were setting up for principality, which suited no better with any of them than scarlet on an ape."

Scarlet might have looked well on an ape or on Mrs. Hutchinson; the house of Cromwell was far more royal than the debauched Stuart and Hanoverian households that succeeded it.

As the stern Puritan moved out, the lewd Restoration moved in. Gin came in, and tavern-keepers on their signboards invited people to come in and get drunk for a penny, and dead drunk for two-pence. During the "No Popery" Gordon riots, children and women on their knees drank themselves to death in the gutters of London. Marlborough, greatest general of his age, was supported by his mistresses, and was one of the basest rogues in history. Nobility adopted adultery in public; noble criminals were disembowelled while alive; dukes and earls defiled common women and common noblewomen by wholesale; one of the queen's maids of honor dropped a baby while dancing, which Charles II gathered up in a handkerchief, and, as Pepys says, "did dissect it, making great sport of it." There was no limit to the public debauchery. It is a relief to look back from the days of these divinely appointed kings to the great, earnest, warped commoner, Cromwell, who steered his life by principles of Puritan piety, justice, and liberty.

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